



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Idaho State Department of Education

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DEPARTMENT SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

BOISE – The Idaho State Department of Education is seeking public comment on a new system of increased accountability that focuses on academic growth.

The Department created the new accountability plan as part of its application for more flexibility under No Child Left Behind. While the official application is due February 21, the Department is seeking public comment on the new accountability system and other parts of the waiver application during the month of January.

“Through this new, higher level of accountability, Idaho will have the flexibility it needs to make sure every student in Idaho is growing academically every year they are in school,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. “I encourage parents, teachers, school administrators and others to review the draft of our new accountability plan and give us feedback on how we can further improve it for Idaho students.”

Idaho has taken a lead role in building the next generation of accountability systems. By passing the Students Come First reform laws in 2011, the state has moved toward an education system based on academic growth and better preparing students for the world that awaits them after high school.

Superintendent Luna worked with other states to develop key principles for new accountability systems through his role as President-Elect (and now current President) of the Council of Chief State School Officers. In June, Superintendent Luna sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, informing him that Idaho would begin moving toward a new system of increased accountability since Congress has not reauthorized No Child Left Behind. The new system would include more flexibility for school districts and a new accountability system that measures growth.

Under the current No Child Left Behind law, states only measure school success based on proficiency – or how many students pass the test. The federal law, which originally passed in 2001, was supposed to be reauthorized four years ago so states could include academic growth, or how much progress a student makes in a given year. However, Congress has not taken action on reauthorization.

With a waiver to certain parts of the No Child Left Behind law, Idaho is creating its new system of increased accountability based on higher standards, academic growth, and improved performance evaluations for educators – all key components of the Students Come First reform laws. These laws have positioned Idaho well to implement its new system of increased accountability.

Under the new accountability plan, schools will no longer receive an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) ranking. Instead, schools will be rated based on a Five-Star scale.

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A Five-Star School is performing excellent in key areas – proficiency, academic growth, and postsecondary and career-ready metrics. A One-Star School, on the other hand, is struggling to meet the state’s goals in these areas and will receive additional technical assistance from the state.

Educational stakeholders and members of the public have until **February 1, 2012** to provide feedback on the draft of Idaho’s waiver application. Comments can be submitted online at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/FederalReq/>.

The final waiver application will go to the Idaho State Board of Education for approval in February before being submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

Visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/FederalReq/> to review a draft of Idaho’s new accountability plan, read an executive summary of the state’s application, or comment on the plan.

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